

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 SIG-03 CIAE-00
EUR-12 H-01 INR-10 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02
OMB-01 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSCE-00
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APPROVED BY PM:JKAHAN
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ACDA:APLATT
ACDA:LWATSON
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE
USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL BELIZE IMMEDIATE
XMT AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

S E C R E T STATE 216300

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PCAT, XM

SUBJECT: CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT: DEBRIEF
ON US-SOVIET TALKS

1. DEPARTMENT IS BRIEFING SELECTED GOVERNMENTS ON THIRD
ROUND OF US-SOVIET CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER (CAT) TALKS,
HELD IN HELSINKI JULY 18-28. ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD
SEEK MEETING AT SENIOR FORMIN LEVEL TO BRIEF CONFIDENTIALLY
ON HELSINKI TALKS, DRAWING ON TALKING POINTS IN PARAGRAPH
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3 BELOW. IF ANY POSTS RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT CONDUCT
SUPPLEMENTARY DEBRIEF OF EMBASSIES IN WASHINGTON, PLEASE
INFORM US IMMEDIATELY.

2. PURPOSE OF DEBRIEFING IS TO KEEP OTHER GOVERNMENTS
INFORMED OF PROGRESS WE ARE MAKING WITH SUPPLIERS ON
CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT. HOST GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT
BE WRONG TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS FROM BRIEFING THAT WE ARE
SERIOUSLY PURSUING A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY GOAL AND HENCE
THAT RECIPIENT INITIATIVES TO HELP DEFINE RESTRAINT

MEASURES ARE TIMELY AND LIKELY TO INFLUENCE SUPPLIER ACTIONS. BUT WE DO NOT WANT TO CONVEY IMPRESSION OF US, MUCH LESS JOINT US-SOVIET, DESIRE TO IMPOSE EXTERNAL LIMITATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA. FURTHER, ALTHOUGH WE SUPPORT CURRENT LATIN AMERICAN INITIATIVES TOWARD

SELF-RESTRAINT, AND HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH BOTH VENEZUELA AND MEXICO WITH REGARD TO THEIR INITIATIVES (PARA 4 BELOW), WE DO NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD EITHER ASSUME TOO STRONG A PUBLIC STANCE OR TOO EAGER A PRIVATE ONE. PLEASE REPORT REACTIONS OF HOST GOVERNMENT TO US-SOVIET CAT TALKS, INCLUDING ANY COMMENTS VOLUNTEERED ON CURRENT LATIN AMERICAN RESTRAINT INITIATIVES OR THEIR RELATIONSHIPS TO SUPPLIER RESTRAINT AS ENVISAGED IN US-SOVIET TALKS.

3. TALKING POINTS FOR CAT III DEBRIEF

A. BACKGROUND

-- THE US AND SOVIET SIDES HAVE MET THREE TIMES TO DISCUSS CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT. AT THE CONCLUSION OF SECOND ROUND OF TALKS LAST MAY, THE TWO SIDES ISSUED A JOINT COM-SECRET

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MUNIQUE IN WHICH THEY AGREED: (1) THAT THE PROBLEM OF LIMITING GLOBAL ARMS TRANSFERS WAS URGENT, AND (2) TO HOLD REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS TO EXPLORE CONCRETE MEASURES TO PROMOTE CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT.

-- EVENTS SINCE THEN HAVE UNDERSCORED THE EXISTENCE OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN FOR SUCH MEASURES. IN JUNE, THE UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT ADOPTED A PROGRAM OF ACTION CALLING FOR CONSULTATIONS AMONG SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS ON LIMITING ARMS TRANSFERS. US-SOVIET BILATERAL MEETINGS ARE THUS CONSISTENT WITH THIS PROGRAM AND REPRESENT AN EFFORT TO IMPLEMENT IT. (NOTE: BRASILIA MAY WISH TO ELIMINATE OR MODIFY THIS POINT, SINCE GOB FORMALLY DISASSOCIATED ITSELF FROM THIS PART OF THE PROGRAM OF ACTION.)

-- IN LATIN AMERICA THE JUNE 22, 1978 DECLARATION BY THE EIGHT SIGNATORIES OF THE 1974 DECLARATION OF AYACUCHO CALLING FOR REGIONAL AGREEMENT LIMITING CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS, AND THE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OF MEXICO TOWARD THE SAME END AT THE OASGA AND SINCE, HAVE GIVEN NEW IMPETUS TO RECIPIENT EFFORTS TO RESTRAIN ARMS TRANSFERS ON A REGIONAL BASIS.

B. THE JULY MEETING: AGREEMENT ON FRAMEWORK

-- IN MOST RECENT (THIRD) ROUND OF TALKS, THE US AND SOVIET UNION AGREED ON A THREE-PART FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE TALKS,

CONSISTING OF POLITICAL-LEGAL CRITERIA, MILITARY TECHNICAL CRITERIA, AND REGIONAL APPLICATION.

-- (1) THE POLITICAL-LEGAL CRITERIA (OR GUIDELINES) ARE BASED ON THE UN CHARTER, UN RESOLUTIONS, AND OTHER INTERNATIONALLY AGREED DOCUMENTS; AND WILL IDENTIFY (A) LEGAL CONSTRAINTS ON ARMS TRANSFERS; AND (B) RELEVANT POLITICAL FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MAKING ARMS TRANSFER DECISIONS. GOOD BASIS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR THE

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ELABORATION OF MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE DURING THE NEXT ROUND.

-- (2) THE MILITARY-TECHNICAL CRITERIA (OR GUIDELINES) WILL DETERMINE HOW TO REGULATE BOTH TYPES AND QUANTITIES OF WEAPONS TRANSFERRED. BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT A COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT WILL REQUIRE BOTH TYPES OF CRITERIA.

-- BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED TO DISCUSS THE APPLICATION OF THESE CRITERIA IN SPECIFIC REGIONAL SITUATIONS. THIS WILL GIVE REALITY TO THE CRITERIA, WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE BE GENERAL AND ABSTRACT STATEMENTS OF INTEREST, AND WILL REDUCE THE CHANCES OF FUTURE MISUNDERSTANDING.

-- BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT ANY REGION OR SUB-REGION OF THE WORLD COULD BE DISCUSSED, PROVIDED REGIONAL GROUPINGS WERE NOT ARTIFICALLY CONTRIVED.

C. INTERIM RESTRAINT

-- BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT, IN ADVANCE OF FINAL AGREEMENT ON CRITERIA, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH INTERIM RESTRAINT AGREEMENTS FOR SPECIFIC REGIONS. WHAT FORM SUCH AGREEMENTS MIGHT TAKE IS NOT YET DETERMINED AND WILL DEPEND IN LARGE PART ON ATTITUDES OF RECIPIENT COUNTRIES.

D. ROLE OF OTHER SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS

-- BOTH SIDES RECOGNIZE THAT SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO DEVELOP ARMS RESTRAINT REGIMES WILL REQUIRE THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF NOT ONLY OTHER SUPPLIERS, BUT ALSO RECIPIENTS. THEY ARE HOPEFUL THAT SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS WILL FIND

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IT IN THEIR INTERESTS TO SUPPORT ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT.

-- WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS THAT WE BELIEVE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS OF RECIPIENTS MUST CON-

TINUE TO BE MET.

E. ASSESSMENT AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

-- THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE MOVEMENT TOWARD REACHING A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THE GENERAL CRITERIA (OR GUIDELINES) FOR US-SOVIET RESTRAINT IN ARMS TRANSFERS.

-- THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO TAKE THESE TALKS SERIOUSLY.

-- THE NEXT ROUND -- TENTATIVELY PLANNED FOR DECEMBER TO ENABLE BOTH SIDES TO UNDERTAKE THOROUGH PREPARATIONS -- WILL PROVIDE THE TEST OF PROSPECTS FOR NEAR-TERM SUCCESS.

4. FYI: VENEZUELA IS CURRENTLY EXPLORING HOW AND WHEN TO CONVENE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING REFERRED TO IN JUNE 22, 1978 RESTATEMENT OF AYACUCHO DECLARATION. MEXICO INVITED ALL LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS, EXCEPT CHILE, TO A MEETING AUGUST 21-24 IN MEXICO CITY. MEXICAN OBJECTIVES IN CONVENING MEETING WERE APPARENTLY THREE-FOLD:

-- TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR MEXICAN POSITION ON PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN TYPES OF WEAPONS IN UN GENEVA CONFERENCE ON LAWS OF WAR;

-- TO REACH AGREEMENT ON ESTABLISHMENT OF LATIN AMERICAN COMMISSION TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON GUIDELINES FOR REGIONAL RESTRAINT TO A 1979 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING;

-- TO MAKE JOINT APPEAL TO SUPPLIERS TO ABIDE BY REGIONAL DESIRE FOR RESTRAINT.

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US POSITION IS TO SUPPORT BOTH INITIATIVES ON THE BASIS THAT THEY HAVE A COMMON GOAL, THAT THE PROCESS OF REACHING THAT GOAL WILL BE LONG-TERM, AND THAT DEVELOPING MOMENTUM AND SUSTAINING THAT PROCESS WILL REQUIRE THE ACTIVE COMMITMENT OF MANY. WE KNOW THAT ATTITUDES AMONG HOST GOVERNMENTS ARE WIDE-RANGING AND HOPE YOUR DEBRIEFING ON HELSINKI TALKS WILL SERVE INDIRECTLY TO ELICIT COMMENTS.
END FYI. CHRISTOPHER

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